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the Roman poets complain occasionally that the general public does not appreciate literary art. But after all, this tells us nothing definite. Appreciation of art is comparative, and when, pray, did the general public ever reach the standard of appreciation set for it by the irritable genius? The truth is that as compared with the world of today the Roman public was unusually sensitive to the charm of real literary art. This is pointed out by Plessis himself and Abbott has discussed the same question at length in one of his charming essays just published. Indeed, to this day, a public reading of Dante in one of the Italian cities is likely to command a larger and more appreciative audience than can be assembled for a similar purpose in any other part of the world.

So far as the originality of Roman poetry is concerned it is well to agree upon what we mean by originality. In literary art form and content go hand in hand. From either point of view Roman poetry is distinctly national as well as undeniably great. It is no paradox to say that Vergil is never less Homeric than when he follows him most closely. So the Roman hexameter, for example, is essentially different from the verse from which it was derived.

Readers of Plessis' own discussion might, perhaps, get the impression that he occasionally betrays a slight tendency to exalt Rome at the expense of Greece. If this were actually the case he might well reply that as a lover of Rome he had certainly had provocation enough. The great Roman poets, however, need no such support as this and in these days of acute specialisation any family jar calculated to destroy the ideal rule of *doctus sermones utriusque linguae* would be a mortal blow to any Classical scholarship really worthy of the name. Neither Greek nor Latin can afford to stand alone.

In conclusion it should be observed that one of the most notable features of this book as a whole is the constant emphasis upon the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic valuation of the poets and poetry of Rome. After all, this is the heart of the matter. However valuable the great Roman poets may be for other purposes we must not lose sight of their universal art, their essential humanity, their spiritual message to our modern world. This is the real issue, and judged by this standard their title to immortality is indefeasible.

KIRBY FLOWER SMITH.

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Society and Politics in Ancient Rome; essays and sketches by  
FRANK FROST ABBOTT. New York; Charles Scribner's  
Sons, 1909. 267 pages.

During the past dozen years we have learned to expect of Professor Abbott accuracy of scholarship, breadth of view, and perfect lucidity of presentation, and when we read the book now

before us we are not disappointed. The essays included in the volume have been written at intervals during the last ten or fifteen years and in all but two cases have been published previously in the Transactions of the American Philological Association, the Classical Journal, Classical Philology, Modern Philology, and other periodicals of a more general character. The author's aim cannot be better expressed than in his own prefatory words: "The social, political, and literary questions which are discussed in them—the participation of women in public life, municipal politics, the tendencies of parliamentary government, realism in fiction, the influence of the theatre, and like matters—were not peculiar to Roman civilization, but they are of all time, and confront all civilized peoples. We are grappling with them to-day, and to see what form they took at another time and what solutions of them or attempts at solving them another highly civilized people made may not be without profit or interest to us. The common inheritance of difficult problems which we thus share with the Romans has led the writer to compare ancient and modern conditions in some detail, or to contrast them, as the case may be. In fact, most of the papers are in some measure comparative studies of certain phases of life at Rome and in our own day."

In a book of this sort the apparatus of the scholar was not to be expected and is present only to a slight extent. Indeed, the specialist might sometimes wish for fuller indication of the sources, but he must remember that these papers were not written for him alone. And while he will not find here very much that is so new as to be startling, he will find a clear, straightforward, and thoughtful discussion of subjects which are of perennial interest, leading up to conclusions with which he will not often feel obliged to disagree.

Of the two articles now published for the first time one deals with "Women in the Trades and Professions." In this the author points out that the tendency toward social equality between the sexes which first made woman a factor in political life, gradually brought her into some of the vocations which had previously been reserved for men. Finding his evidence chiefly in the inscriptions he discusses the extent to which women were engaged in medical, legal, and religious practice and then considers the achievements of women in the field of literature. Here Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, Sulpicia, Agrippina the Younger, and the author of the *Peregrinatio Silviae* (?) come in for special attention. On the stage, however, and in commercial life the women are usually of Greek extraction and belong to the lower classes. The striking exception to this rule is in connection with the business of making brick to which some of the most prominent ladies of the Empire devoted their energies.

The other paper not previously published is entitled "Literature and the Common People of Rome." Here the author's

purpose is to find out how far the common people of Rome knew and appreciated literature. Under the Republic an excellent test is furnished by the drama, which, though written for the masses, attains a higher standard than the average modern play. Under the Empire literary education became more general so that practically every boy learned his Vergil and his Horace at school, and numerous public libraries were founded. Common people who could appreciate the wall paintings with all their abundance of mythological detail or in idle moments could scratch lines or phrases from the poets on house walls at Pompeii were not quite devoid of literary knowledge and appreciation. Metrical epitaphs, too, most of which are the work of common people, show not only familiarity with the classical poets but in many cases some creative power of their own. "Had I a facile pen," writes Professor Abbott (p. 185), "I should try to render a few of them into English verse, but I shall have to content myself with turning three or four of them into plain prose". One of those selected for translation into "plain prose" is the famous epitaph of Claudia, a typical Roman matron of the early days, which appears twice in the volume (pp. 42 and 185). The only rendering of this charming poem into English verse with which I am familiar is one made several years ago by my friend and colleague, Professor Kirby Flower Smith, who perhaps has the facile pen which Professor Abbott too modestly disclaims. The metrical form seems to preserve the antique homely flavor of the original so much better than plain prose that I cannot refrain from reproducing it here.

Stay, stranger, stay, and read what I have said—  
 'Tis but a word—of her that lieth dead  
 Within this tomb,—alas, unsightly site<sup>1</sup>  
 Of a most sightly lady, Claudia hight  
 By parents dear. In wedlock she was joined  
 And loved her lord with all her heart and mind.  
 Two boys she bore. Of these she left one brother  
 Above the ground, beneath it laid the other.  
 Her sprightly converse never failed to please,  
 Her every movement told of grace and ease,  
 She span and kept her house. Stranger, pass on;  
 I've said what I would say of her that's gone.

Four of the twelve essays deal with political subjects and in these we see the author at his best. "Municipal Politics in Pompeii" is mainly a study of the painted notices on the house walls and of their bearing on elections and in general on questions of city government. "The Story of Two Oligarchies" is a comparison of the ancient Roman Senate with the Senate of the United States, a comparison which brings out many striking points of similarity in their constitution and history. But the

<sup>1</sup> This translation of *sepulcrum hau pulcrum pulcrae feminae* is of course directly suggested by Lane's "Site not sightly of a sightly dame": *Latin Grammar*, 1898, § 1450. K. F. S.

writer is not so rash as to predict for the American body the final loss of prestige which resulted from the class prejudice and inefficiency of the Roman Senate. He wisely contents himself with pointing out that up to the present time similar conditions prevail and that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." The third of these essays, "Women and Public Affairs under the Roman Republic," is one of the most interesting of all, dealing with the influence of women in politics either directly or through their husbands, brothers, or other relatives. After referring to the women of early tradition and legend, the author gives a dramatic presentation of the concerted action of the large body of women which brought about the repeal of the Oppian Law in 195 B. C. and mentions the vigorous protest of the women in the face of the financial demands of the Second Triumvirate. He then analyses in detail the political influence of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi; Clodia, whom he holds responsible for Cicero's banishment; Julia, Caesar's daughter; Octavia, the unfortunate wife of M. Antonius; Scribonia, wife of Octavianus; Servilia, mother of Brutus, the conspirator; and Fulvia, wife successively of Clodius, Curio, and Antonius. If it is not ungracious to criticize so delightful a chapter as this, we may point out that the author is scarcely justified, especially in the light of recent topographical studies, in calling the Rome of Servius Tullius, or indeed the Rome of any subsequent period, "the city on the Palatine" (p. 43). We may also express the feeling that he goes somewhat beyond the warrant of his evidence at times and exaggerates the importance of the feminine influence. If we are to accept at full value all his deductions, we are bound to believe that men like Clodius and M. Antonius were little more than pawns upon the political chessboard moved hither and thither by the strong hand of a female player. It is perhaps putting the case too strongly, notwithstanding the statements of Cicero, Plutarch, and Cassius Dio, to say that Fulvia "made herself mistress of Rome and ruled Italy with a capricious tyranny which surpassed even that of the triumvirs" (p. 72) and "at her instance, Antony took possession of Caesar's papers, forged documents to suit his own purpose, . . . stirred the populace to indignation at Caesar's murder, and began the hasty recruiting of troops" (p. 74). Then, too, Professor Abbott has not exhausted the available evidence on this point. He might with good effect have cited the case of Praecia, who was the virtual ruler of the state through her tool, Cethegus. At least this is the statement of Plutarch (Lucull. 6): *παντάσιν εἰς ἐκείνην περιήλθεν ἡ τῆς πόλεως δύναμις· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐπράττετό τι δημοσίᾳ Κεθίγου μὴ σπουδάζοντος οὐδὲ Πραικίας μὴ κελευούσης παρὰ Κεθίγου*. Even Lucullus, seeking the command against Mithridates in 75 B. C., was obliged to win the favor of Praecia as a preliminary to gaining the support of Cethegus. The other paper which deals with a political question is on "The Theatre as a Factor in Roman Politics under the Re-

public." This is in the main an examination of Cicero's statement (pro Sest., 106-127) that of the three places where the Roman people could make known their judgment on public questions, namely, the *contio*, the *comitia*, and the games, public opinion found true expression only at the theatrical performances and the gladiatorial contests. With this view of the great orator our author after a study of specific recorded cases fully agrees.

Two literary essays follow, "Petronius: a Study in Ancient Realism" and "A Roman Puritan" (Persius), in which Professor Abbott enters with sympathy and discernment into the spirit of these two writers so utterly dissimilar. Most serious students of Petronius, however, would probably not agree with his charitable statement that two *good* translations into English of the *Cena Trimalchionis* have lately appeared (p. 115). "Petrarch's Letters to Cicero" here published in translation are of especial interest because they show the effect on the great humanist of the first perusal of Cicero's Letters which he himself had discovered at Verona in 1345. "The Career of a Roman Student" is a fascinating biography of Cicero's son, which gives in particular a graphic picture of student life in Athens. The materials of course are drawn mainly from the Ciceronian correspondence.

The two remaining essays deal with subjects which properly lie outside the field indicated by the title of the volume. In "Some Spurious Inscriptions and Their Authors" the author does not profess to give a complete survey of epigraphical forgery but merely "to show the development of the art and to illustrate the methods of some of its most famous, or infamous, promoters." Most of his space is devoted to Roselli of Grumentum, the Spaniard Trigueros, and the Neapolitan Ligorio, and to some of the most interesting inventions of anonymous forgers, such as the inscription set up by Hannibal to Aemilius Paulus at Cannae, the passport given by Caesar to Cicero, and the fragments of the *Acta Diurna*. The paper contains little that is not familiar to advanced students of Latin epigraphy but is none the less valuable as a brief statement of the most essential features of an art which was extensively practised for centuries and which has given the editors of the *Corpus* so much trouble. The last essay in the volume is in the field of pure palaeography and treats of "The Evolution of the Modern Forms of the Letters of our Alphabet." Its main thesis is that "in the development of writing the working of the principles of evolution is shown more fully and more simply than in any one of the biological sciences" and this thesis is illustrated by the history of A, B, D, G, H, N, Q, and R. The parallel is drawn between the facts of biology and those of palaeography by showing that from an original single species there is a tendency to produce in course of time slightly varying types of the same species and that of these varying types those fittest to survive *will* survive. The main factors that determine fitness to survive in the case of graphical forms are

legibility, beauty, economy of effort, and economy of space. In the course of twenty-five pages these principles are applied to the actually attested forms of the letters in question in such a way as to show clearly the historical development of form from the original capital to the modern printed or cursive form.

A useful index concludes this interesting and suggestive volume of essays which will stand as a mute protest against the too prevalent notion that a successful appeal to the larger audience must necessarily be unscholarly and that good scholarship means boredom.

HARRY LANGFORD WILSON.

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TOLMAN, HERBERT CUSHING: *Ancient Persian Lexicon and the Texts of the Achaemenidan Inscriptions transliterated and translated with special Reference to their recent Re-examination.* XII + 134 pp. New York, 1908. \$1.25.

The book under consideration presents, in compact form, a most valuable summary of nearly all accessible data on the Old Persian inscriptions, a theme to which Prof. Tolman has devoted himself for many years, and in which he must be regarded as the leading American authority. The new collation of the text of the Behistūn inscriptions *in situ* by King and Thompson and a similar, though more partial, examination by Jackson have placed Old Persian studies on a far firmer footing than ever before, though a like collation of the remaining texts still remains an urgent necessity, and problems are yet found in unwelcome abundance. Tolman's book appears at a happy moment, for the edition of King and Thompson, like the final installment of Weissbach and Bang's *Altpersische Keilinschriften*, is in many respects disappointing to the Old Persian scholar. The work naturally falls into two divisions: text and translation, and lexicon, an order which the title unfortunately reverses. The texts are admirably transliterated, the only errors noted being *ty<sup>n</sup>a* for *ty<sup>n</sup>ā* (Bh. i, 23), and *adamšām* for *adamšā[m]* (Dar. NRa, 18). The translation is equally careful, though the reviewer cannot assent to the following details: *ā[mātā]* (Bh. i, 7, Bh. a, 11) means "valiant" rather than "of ancient lineage" (cf. Bartholomae, *Altiran. Wb.*, 1165 f.); *hauv adakaīy naiy* [*a*] *vadā* [*āha*] (Bh. ii, 24) (for the supplement cf. Tolman, p. 69) means "he then [was] not there" rather than "did not there [withstand]"; *avabāšām hamaranam kartam* (Bh. ii, 36 f. and often) would more literally be translated "then their battle [was] made" than "then the battle [was] fought by them"; *frāha* *jam* (Bh. ii, 78) is "hanged", not "haled" (cf. Bartholomae, 1743); *viḍāpatiy* (Bh. iii, 26) is rather "at home" (cf. Tolman, p. 125) than "in the palace"; *pasā* (Bh. iii, 32) is "behind", not "with"; *hamahyāyā* *ḥarda* (Bh. iv, 4 f. and often) is "in like fashion", not "in the